

John Longden House  
111 S. Royal Street  
Alexandria  
Virginia

HABS No. VA-689

HABS  
VA  
7-ALEX,  
166-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

## JOHN LONGDEN HOUSE

HABS  
VA  
7-ALEX,  
1166 -

Location: 111 S. Royal Street, Alexandria, Virginia

Present Owner: Demolished in 1968 by the Alexandria Redevelopment Housing Authority as part of an urban renewal project in the old commercial center of Alexandria.

Statement of Significance: This much altered building was one of three buildings in this block owned by the prominent Alexandrian John Longden (see HABS report on 105 and 107 S. Royal Street, VA-685) and was separated from the other two by one building.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

## 1. Date of erection: before 1825

On September 10, 1800, Michael Steiber and his wife conveyed to John Longden for £ 35, a lot adjoining 109 S. Royal Street on the south and fronting 30 feet on Royal Street. The earlier deed to Steiber dated December 11, 1790, mentions the brick house then erected at 109 S. Royal Street in establishing the lot boundary: "Beginning on the west side of Royal Street at that part of Lot 55 which adjoins a Brick House lately built by Samuel Simmonds . . ."

In 1805, John Longden conveyed the southern 15 feet of this lot of ground which became 113 S. Royal Street (see HABS report VA-673) to Presley Jacobs, Longden retaining the 15 feet to the north. In his will, as drawn October 4, 1825, Longden conveys "to my grandson, Robert Bentley, the house and lot now in my own occupancy on the west side of Royal Street, adjoining on the south to the house of Joseph Ingle's heirs (originally Samuel Simmonds' house). Longden does not describe this house as "brick" and it was probably frame. (By the time he died in 1830, Longden had moved to the West End.) The probability that the building was frame is supported by the prices later received for the three Longden buildings. When the Bentleys sold 111 S. Royal Street in 1846, they received only \$365.

## 2. Architect: Unknown

3. Original and subsequent owners: John Longden was the original owner; his grandson, Robert Bentley was the second. The Bentley family owned it until 1846, when it was purchased by Edward Burchell. Burchell also became the owner in 1843 of the Samuel Simmonds House (see HABS report VA-684).

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The history of the owner of this building, John Longden, is detailed in the HABS report on 105-107 S. Royal Street (VA-685).

C. Sources of Information:

See sources in the HABS report on the John Longden Houses (VA-685).

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

A colonial-revival style brick facade dating from 1956 conceals the original treatment for this building--likely of the Federal style characteristic of Alexandria architecture of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Two-and-a-half stories, two bays
2. Chimneys: Interior end chimney
3. Roof: Cable with dormer

C. Description of Interior:

Modified two-room plan.

D. Site:

Like the two other buildings associated with John Longden, it faces eastward and stands flush with the other buildings along Royal Street.

Prepared by Mrs. Hugh B. Cox of  
The Historic Alexandria  
Foundation  
July 1968  
Edited by  
Antoinette J. Lee  
November 1975

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken in 1968 to document the commercial and residential buildings in downtown Alexandria which were to be demolished in an urban renewal project. The project was cosponsored by the Historic Alexandria Foundation and the Historic American Buildings Survey. Mrs. Hugh B. Cox was the historian and George Eisenman supplied the photographs. The material was edited and updated in 1975 by Antoinette J. Lee, working on contract for the Historic American Buildings Survey.